

Dahomey

National Wildlife Refuge

photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1990.
- Acres: 9,691 Bolivar County, MS.
- Refuge is currently unstaffed and managed by Mississippi Wetland Management District in Grenada, MS.
- Location: The refuge is located in Bolivar County on Hwy 446, 8 miles west of Boyle and about 15 miles southwest of Cleveland.

Natural History

- The refuge is the largest remaining tract of bottomland-hardwood-forested wetlands in the northwest portion of Mississippi.
- Late winter concentrations of migratory waterfowl reach 5,000. Populations of white-tailed deer and eastern wild turkey attract hunters. Large numbers of neotropical migratory songbirds are especially attracted to the forested woodlands in summer months.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Currently unstaffed; by midsummer 1998 will have a permanent staff of two.
- 10,000 visitors annually. Visitation expected to increase dramatically with permanent staff and increased development.
- Current budget (FY 98) \$100,000.

Refuge Objectives

- Provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and other migratory birds.
- Provide recreational use and environmental education for the public.

Management Tools

- Water management for waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds.
- Cooperative farming.
- Bottomland-hardwood-wetland forest management and reforestation.
- Deer management with public hunting.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.
- Turkey management with public hunting.

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing.
- Hunting, including youth hunts and handicapped facilities.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Auto tour route—weather permitting.

Calendar of Events

May: Migratory Bird Day.

October: National Wildlife Refuge Week.

October-November: archery deer hunting.

October-February: squirrel/rabbit hunting, including youth hunt.

November-December: deer hunts: general gun, muzzleloader and youth general gun hunts.

November-March: waterfowl hunting, including youth hunt.

March-April: turkey hunting.

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Questions and Answers

Are permits required for hunting and fishing?

Yes, permits are required, they cost \$12.50, and the number is unlimited.

Are internal refuge roads open to vehicular traffic?

Yes, weather permitting, all internal refuge gravel roads are open to vehicular traffic if they are not too badly rutted.

Are handicapped facilities available?

Yes, following the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks definition of handicapped, two handicapped blinds are available for deer hunting, one with all weather gravel road access, and one with 4-Wheeler access.

Is waterfowl hunting permitted?

Yes, beginning with the 1998-99 season, with the \$12.50 refuge hunting permit, waterfowl hunting is allowed.

Is the refuge open to turkey hunting?

Yes, with the \$12.50 refuge hunting permit, the refuge is open to turkey season although the opening date is not always the same as the statewide season.